



Kid Talk

February 2019



MARK'S MEANDERINGS

Another year is in the books and what a year it was at the Clubs! We finished our first year at our Calvary and Clyde Clubs. We saw those new sites double and quadruple in size as the year progressed but best of all, we were able to serve more children because of them! We had our biggest Summer Camp ever, Spring Break Camp ever, and our Wylie Club broke the 100 member mark and consistently serves over 100 children a day!

It was a great year for donors as well! We had a mini gym put into the Calvary Club, courtesy of Planet Fitness. Sherwin Williams painted our Clyde gym! Lowe's provided activities

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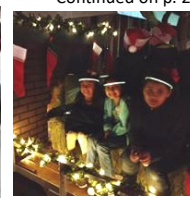
GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**

Christmas at the Clubs

Clubs Bring Christmas Cheer to Club Kids and Surrounding Communities

December brought many exciting events to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Abilene, such as parades, parties, and visits from Santa! Not only did the Clubs celebrate the kids who attend them, but they also spent time in their communities serving others and celebrating the Christmas season.

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What's Inside?



Mark's Meanderings



DONORS



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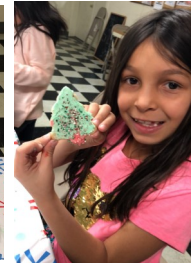
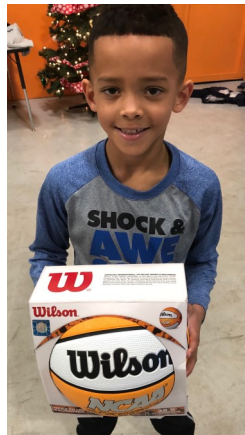
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MARK'S MEANDERINGS

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and materials for our kids to experience giving back to the community, Jo Ann's give us tons of supplies for art, and the list just keeps going! I share all that to say this: 2018 was a banner year and 2019 looks to be an even bigger year at the Clubs! It doesn't happen without great staff, a great Board, and especially great Donors! Thank YOU for making last year magical and for the hope of an even greater year in 2019!



Return to Sender

Thanks to the Optimist Club Unlimited of Abilene, our Club kids were given the chance to give back a little this Christmas. Through the Return To Sender program, kids were taken to eat a fun, free meal courtesy of Grandy's, then taken on a shopping trip to purchase gifts for their immediate families. Each child also received clothing and gifts for themselves! What a great way to show our Club kids how to spread the Christmas cheer!





Thank You
 Ms. Lale and the
 T and T Family
 Foundation



Christmas
 In The
 Country





30th Anniversary
 CHRISTMAS
 LIGHTS PARADE



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Andrew has come to the Highland Boys & Girls Club for 2 years and his favorite activities are playing with Legos and tinkering with anything he finds he can build with. For Andrew, the Club is a place for him to build, create, and exercise his creativity, free of restraints and/or expectations. As a result, Andrew has

created some amazing and complex Lego structures and vehicles. However his all time favorite things to build are robots. Andrew has even been able to show some of the other kids his techniques and abilities and now we have an entire group of kids working on building new and unique robots and other creations every day. Legos aren't Andrew's only building tool though, he is always asking for tape, pencils, rubber bands, or anything he can use to build some new toy or contraption. Andrew is always figuring out new ways to create whatever "thing" he has imagined. The Club gives him the freedom to let his creative mind go wild.



Emalie is a first grader at Clyde Elementary. She has made great strides since coming to the Clyde Boys & Girls Club this school year. Emalie has grown from a shy fearful six year old into a member who loves to play games and enjoys being at the Club with all the

other kids. She now lights up with excitement as she enters the Club in the afternoon and her smile says it all. Emalie has been a Star of the Week for her behavior and willingness to follow the rules.



Noah, Deron are 11 year old and have been attending the Club for 5 years. For them, they HAD to come, they CHOOSE to come, and they choose to stay. Noah tells you it gives them a chance to see each other.

come and hang out and play games with each other," said Noah. "I can be home watching T.V., playing video games, or getting into my room here," Noah added. "I like playing them in basketball," Noah said. For these three guys, the Club provides a place and creates an opportunity to be themselves. It gives them a sense of independence and freedom. It gives them a break from the daily routines of the school and boys exemplify the best reasons why the Boys & Girls Club is important.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Brooklyn has been with the club for almost a year and in her time with us she has brought such joy to the Wylie Boys & Girls Club. In fact, when Brooklyn is not at the Club you can feel a big piece of the puzzle missing. Every time she walks in the Club she makes everyone feel special and loved. She does so by

helping out others, complimenting others, giving warm hugs, and making everyone smile from ear to ear. We are pleasantly surprised by Brooklyn's growth into a social butterfly this past year! Way to go, Brooklyn!

Derreck and Aaron

best friends who have been at the Boys & Girls Clubs for the first few years they joined, but nowadays they are inseparable! When asked why they attend the Club they will tell them an opportunity to be a leader. "We like that we can be a leader," Aaron said. "We'd probably be in trouble if we weren't here." Derreck chimed in. For them, it's an environment for them to be a leader and belonging and it's a great environment. These three exist.



Gregory is an extraordinary child. If you just met him, you would have no idea of the struggle he has been through his whole life. Gregory is a Type 1 diabetic. A huge part of his life is checking his blood sugar to make sure it stays at a stable level. But beyond that Gregory is just another kid. He has a supportive family that has informed the club of everything that can be done to keep Gregory healthy. He has an older brother, Garret, and a younger sister, Gracelynn who are always there for him, along with school, friends, and the Boys & Girls Club. We had one of our staff trained by the Martinez school nurse to help Gregory check his levels at the Club every day. Gregory makes everyday amazing. He comes in with a smile on his face, even on the days when he is not feeling his best. He is an inspiration to all who know him and his story.

Jennica, Kiara, Zoriah & Isabella



are great friends, and they know what an amazing and exciting time

it is to be here at the Lee Boys & Girls Club. A new school year means new opportunities for our newest club members to be a part of our next generation of leaders. We are blessed to have a group of six-year-old girls who came in with an overwhelmed face on the first day, to being best friends by the second day. These future leaders are building friendships that could last a lifetime. That's one of the best things about joining the Boys & Girls Clubs of Abilene. The environment that our staff has created give our members an opportunity to build relationships with each other. These four young ladies are now inseparable and it shows how a positive and friendly environment could help nervous young children build healthy relationships.



Clyde Club Says Thank You And Honors Veterans

The Clyde Boys & Girls Club laid over 330 wreaths on the graves of United States service men and women at the Clyde Cemetery during National Wreaths Across America in December. The program is designed to coordinate wreath-laying ceremonies across the U.S. and to carry out their mission of "Remember, Honor and Teach." The students were taught how to say "Thank You" in American Sign Language in order to thank the honored for their service. The children truly enjoyed laying the wreaths, and many of them came away from the experience with a new found respect for the fallen service men and women, and how to properly honor them.



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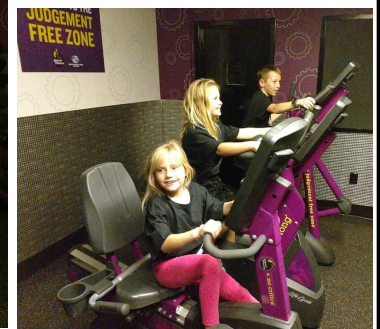
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Local Gym Donates Equipment To Club

Thank you, Planet Fitness, for bringing a new level of fitness to our Calvary Club—Equipment and a nice donation! The children are really enjoying their new workout space!





BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF ABILENE

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